

Alfa Company Chain of Command Gets Involved

Alfa Company PAO

A Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) can only work as hard or travel as far as its Civil Engineer Support Equipment (CESE) can support. When NMCB ONE arrived in Guam in September, the CESE wasn't likely to take the Battalion anywhere. Maintenance was at best bearish with a significant deadline (inoperable equipment) list and a daily increase in the pieces of equipment that required repairs. "We certainly have job security out here" said CMC Dennis Hammersmith, the Construction Mechanic Platoon Commander and Chief in Charge of the equipment. Alfa Company's chain of command, after seeing the volume of repairs mount and concerned about the impact on projects, took it upon themselves to get involved in the maintenance process. The solution, work overtime! Working 17 hours a day vice 13, the Alfa Company Commander, Company Chief, Company Operations Chief, and Company Maintenance Chief set aside the paperwork, pushed away from their desks and went to work in the shops to turn wrenches with the troops. Even Equipment Operators found themselves under their vehicles instead of behind the wheel. Under the close supervision of a Construction Mechanic, an EO1 got to turn a wrench and repair vehicles. "This was a great experience," said EO1 Henderson, the Company Dispatcher, "I like working behind the wheel but helping fix the vehicles gives me a special appreciation for the way the engines work or break for that matter".

When the week began, Alfa Company had open Equipment Repair Orders (EROs) on 103 vehicles, basically one third of the vehicles in the battalion. By Thursday, the number of open EROs dropped to 55, ahhh light at the end of the tunnel. "We saw a lot of people doing a lot of great work out there and I like the results," said CMC David Dulong, the Company Maintenance Chief. "Heck, when you have a Marine Captain sitting in an engine turning a wrench to help the troops, you know your doing something right," said EOCS Mike Noggle, the Company Chief. The Alfa Dawgs (as they are affectionately referred to throughout the battalion) completed their first week of overtime with great success and developed a tight bond between all members because of the shared experience. "There are seven months to this deployment," said Captain Matt Gomes, the Company Commander, "we got a good chunk of work done right now but, we don't want to keep getting the work done this way. We want to get it done without keeping people here all hours of the day."

The Alfa Dawgs know that NMCB ONE only goes as far as Alfa Company can roll. For that reason, they put in a 78-hour week (with zero safety mishaps) in order to repair equipment that will keep the Battalion rolling. In doing so, they lived up to the Battalion's reputation as "The First and The Finest".



A few of the Alfa Dawgs show EOCS(SCW) how to change the tire on a HMMWV.



Captain and CMC(SCW) try to look like they work hard.